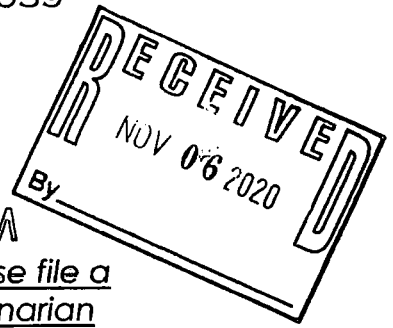


ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD
1740 W. ADAMS ST., SUITE 4600, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007
PHONE (602) 364-1PET (1738) FAX (602) 364-1039
VETBOARD.AZ.GOV



COMPLAINT INVESTIGATION FORM

If there is an issue with more than one veterinarian please file a separate Complaint Investigation Form for each veterinarian

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received: Nov. 6, 2020 Case Number: 21-57

A. THIS COMPLAINT IS FILED AGAINST THE FOLLOWING:

Name of Veterinarian/CVT: Dr. Racheal M. McKinney
Premise Name: _____
Premise Address: _____
City: _____ State: ARIZONA Zip Code: _____
Telephone: (480) 436-4970

B. INFORMATION REGARDING THE INDIVIDUAL FILING COMPLAINT*:

Name: Heidi Cornelia
Address: [REDACTED]
City: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED] Zip Code: [REDACTED]
Home Telephone: _____ Cell Telephone: [REDACTED]

*STATE LAW REQUIRES WE HAVE TO DISCLOSE YOUR NAME UNLESS WE CAN SHOW THAT DISCLOSURE WILL RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL HARM TO YOU, SOMEONE ELSE OR THE PUBLIC PER A.R.S. § 41-1010. IF YOU HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT SUBSTANTIAL HARM WILL RESULT IN DISCLOSURE OF YOUR NAME PLEASE PROVIDE COPIES OF RESTRAINING ORDERS OR OTHER DOCUMENTATION.

C. PATIENT INFORMATION (1):

Name: capricho
Breed/Species: half arabian half friesland
Age: 7 Sex: m Color: grey

PATIENT INFORMATION (2):

Name: _____
Breed/Species: _____
Age: _____ Sex: _____ Color: _____

D. VETERINARIANS WHO HAVE PROVIDED CARE TO THIS PET FOR THIS ISSUE:

Please provide the name, address and phone number for each veterinarian.

Dr. Racheal M. McKinney - (480) 436-4970 - Initial castration

Southwest Equine - 6001 E Bell Rd, Scottsdale, AZ 85254 - (480) 998-9460 - corrective surgery

E. WITNESS INFORMATION:

Please provide the name, address and phone number of each witness that has direct knowledge regarding this case.

Heidi Cornelia - [redacted] - Horse owner

Rob Pellicci - [redacted] - stable owner

Dr. Racheal M. McKinney - [redacted]

Vet Tech - Unknown

Vet Tech - Unknown

Attestation of Person Requesting Investigation

By signing this form, I declare that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. Further, I authorize the release of any and all medical records or information necessary to complete the investigation of this case.

Signature: Heidi Cornelia

Date: 11/5/2020

F. ALLEGATIONS and/or CONCERNS:

Please provide all information that you feel is relevant to the complaint. This portion must be either typewritten or clearly printed in ink.

I had my horse castrated in the field by Dr. Racheal McKinney from Urban livestock 23rd Oct 2020. My horse did not receive enough sedation and jumped up mid surgery throwing the vet technician and still with large emasculator inside him leaping around with the tool inside him for around 5 minutes. After catching him they were able to add more sedation to remove the tool that was hanging from his scrotum. Dr. Racheal McKinney assured me everything was fine and gave me verbal instructions to hand walk him around for the next two weeks. I paid her \$500 by credit card for the surgery and she left.

Later that night Rob Pellicia the stables owner called me to say my horse was bleeding profusely from his scrotum and I have to call the vet. It is never possible to contact the dr, directly but the vet technician told me to send pictures and that bleeding was normal following this procedure, I sent some pictures and she made her way to the stables where she and another vet technician sedated my horse while he was standing and stitched up the large piece of flesh hanging from the scrotum. They assured me everything was good and to continue with the 7 days of anti inflammatory medication.

I did not receive an email with any followup care as promised by the receptionist therefore messaged the veterinary practice to make sure they had my correct email address therefore I continued to exercise him as she verbally suggested and gave him 1 pill per day as Dr. Racheal McKinney verbally instructed.

Concerns arose on the 29th of October as the wounds were extremely large and didn't seem to be healing, they seemed to begin to look infected, I sent pictures by text to the Urban livestock phone number expressing concern to which the practice said they will forward to Dr. Racheal McKinney. A call back from the receptionist re assuring me that's about how it should look and to keep doing what I'm currently doing was verbally said over the phone.

I continued to send more pictures on the 30th since the wound was bulging with fleshy tissue that looked yellow, possibly infected? I received a text "thankyou for sending updates, keep doing what you're doing"

By Monday 2nd of November I sent another picture as the wound on my horse's scrotum was bulging with smelly flesh, yellow and my horse was extremely uncomfortable and depressed, the practice replied saying they could mail me some additional medication. By Tuesday the 3rd, the wound had a huge infected spermatic cord hanging out of it with pus and yellow liquid coming out on both sides. I had called Monday and Tuesday in which the receptionist did not seem concerned by the pictures sent and said to me "it's your horse you know him best and should know if it's an emergency". I had called one more time that night asking if the doctor could come out on an emergency to which I received the response "I don't think the doctor will want to come out with the way you're talking to me" after a had a stressed tone of voice due to growing concerns and fears about my horse with little to no contact follow up, medication and general decency. I am not a professional veterinarian and needed advice post surgery.

I decided to get a 2nd opinion from Southwest Equine Hospital on Wednesday the 3rd after talking to the Dr. there on Tuesday the 2nd, without even showing her pictures she suspected it to be an infected spermatic cord. She came out to the farm Wednesday the 3rd and told me he would need surgery at hospital as soon as possible to cut the infection out on both sides since it was heavily infected and needed strong antibiotics pain medication and anti inflammatory before it could spread to the abdomen and be extremely life threatening.

Corrective Surgery was performed, the Doctor at Southwest Equine Hospital told me that the cord was not cut far enough and contamination happened from when the horse woke up during surgery with the emasculator hanging inside of him.

I have yet to get any phone calls or responses to the emergency I had called Dr. Racheal McKinney from Urban livestock on after receiving no follow up which in my eyes is complete negligence of post operative care especially after there were complications during the surgery. I never want someone to have to experience this again. I am extremely thankful that Southwest Equine Hospital acted quickly and got my horse to the hospital before it was too late. The surgery bill was around \$2500 on top of \$500 I had given Dr. Racheal McKinney from Urban livestock for the initial castration. To me this is completely unacceptable and I feel like at the very least I should be compensated the money back I spent on this.



Tracy Riendeau <tracy.riendeau@vetboard.az.gov>

Complaint - URBAN LIVESTOCK EQUINE

h CNE 
To: tracy.riendeau@vetboard.az.gov

Thu, Nov 5, 2020 at 1:50 PM

I had my horse castrated in the field by Dr. Racheal McKinney from Urban livestock 23rd Oct 2020. My horse did not receive enough sedation and jumped up mid surgery throwing the vet technician and still with a large emasculator inside him leaping around with the tool inside him for around 5 minutes. After catching him they were able to add more sedation to remove the tool that was hanging from his scrotum. Dr. Racheal McKinney assured me everything was fine and gave me verbal instructions to hand walk him around for the next two weeks. I paid her \$500 by credit card for the surgery and she left.

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I did not receive an email with any followup care as promised by the receptionist therefore messaged the veterinary practice to make sure they had my correct email address therefore I continued to exercise him as she verbally suggested and gave him 1 pill per day as Dr. Racheal McKinney verbally instructed.

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I continued to send more pictures on the 30th since the wound was bulging with fleshy tissue that looked yellow, possibly infected? I received a text "thankyou for sending updates, keep doing what you're doing"

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Corrective Surgery was performed, the Doctor at Southwest Equine Hospital told me that the cord was not cut far enough and contamination happened from when the horse woke up during surgery with the emasculator hanging inside of him.


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11/6/2020

State of Arizona Mail - Complaint - URBAN LIVESTOCK EQUINE

there were complications during the surgery. I never want someone to have to experience this again. I am extremely thankful that Southwest Equine Hospital acted quickly and got my horse to the hospital before it was too late.

The surgery bill was around \$2500 on top of \$500 I had given Dr. Racheal McKinney from Urban livestock for the initial castration. To me this is completely unacceptable and I feel like at the very least I should be compensated the money back I spent on this.

 **Complaint Investigation Form 8.14.17 FILLABLE - UrbanLivestockequine.pdf**
69K

On October 23rd 2020 I accompanied Dr. McKinney on a call after hours to re-visit the horse that had been castrated earlier in the day. Upon arrival there was tissue hanging from the scrotum and some blood on the horse's legs. We promptly took to cleaning up the blood to get a good assessment on what we were looking at. After cleaning, Dr. McKinney sutured up the area as I held the horse. Once complete I walked the horse back to his stall and again checked for bleeding. Seeing none, I put the horse back into his stall.

The morning of Nov 3rd 2020 the owner called in and I answered the phone. She requested to have the doctor back out for a follow up that day. I informed her that our schedule was full and that if she wanted us out she would be required to pay an after hours fee as well as the travel fee. She informed me that she already had an appointment for the following day with another vet and that she didn't want to pay us to come out. She also informed me at that time that she would not be using us as a vet service any longer and hung up the phone.

The afternoon of November 3rd 2020 the owner called in again and I answered the phone. She said the horse had pulled at the scrotum and the area had opened up again. I again informed her that she would have to pay fees for us to come out. She agreed but said she would not be paying for any services on top of those fees because she felt it was the doctor's fault that the sutures didn't hold. I explained to her that it had been many days with the scrotum healing since the doctor was out and if the horse pulled at the scrotum that was not a failure of the sutures. The owner proceeded to use vulgar language and told me how incapable our doctor was. I told her that if she continued to speak that way, I wasn't sure if the doctor would want to come out and deal with her. She informed me that she would be issuing a claim on her credit card and disputing the original charges and then hung up the phone.

Kade McKinney 11-26-2020

Douglas A. Ducey
- Governor -



Victoria Whitmore
- Executive Director -

ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

1740 W. Adams Street, Ste. 4600, Phoenix, Arizona 85007
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vetboard.az.gov

INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

TO: Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board

FROM: PM Investigative Committee: Adam Almaraz - Chair
Amrit Rai, DVM
Cameron Dow, DVM
Brian Sidaway, DVM

STAFF PRESENT: Tracy A. Riendeau, CVT – Investigations
Marc Harris, Assistant Attorney General

RE: Case: 21-57
Complainant(s): Heidi Cornelia
Respondent(s): Rachel McKinney, DVM (License: 6725)

SUMMARY:

Complaint Received at Board Office: 11/6/20
Committee Discussion: 5/4/21
Board IIR: 6/16/21

APPLICABLE STATUTES AND RULES:

Laws as Amended August 2018
(Lime Green); Rules as Revised
September 2013 (Yellow)

On October 23, 2020, "Capricho," a 7-year-old male Arabian Friesian mix was castrated by Respondent. During the castration, the horse awakened and had to be administered additional sedation to complete the surgery.

That evening, the horse began bleeding therefore Respondent went to the barn to evaluate the horse and stop the bleeding.

Over the next several days, Complainant sent pictures of the horse's scrotum to Respondent to keep her updated on the swelling. Complainant was concerned the horse's swelling was worsening and Respondent was not assisting.

On November 4, 2020, Complainant sought out a second opinion by Southwest Equine where corrective surgery was performed.

Complainant was noticed and appeared telephonically.

Respondent was noticed and did not appear.

The Committee reviewed medical records, testimony, and other documentation as described below:

- Complainant(s) narrative: *Heidi Cornelia*
- Respondent(s) narrative/medical record: *Rachel McKinney, DVM*
- Consulting Veterinarian(s) narrative/medical records: *Southwest Equine Hospital*

PROPOSED 'FINDINGS of FACT':

1. On October 14, 2020, Complainant called to schedule a castration for the horse. An appointment was made for November 3, 2020.
2. On October 21, 2020, Complainant called Respondent's premises to see if the horse's castration could be moved up. The castration was scheduled for October 23, 2020.
3. On October 23, 2020, Respondent and staff member, Ms. Holder, arrived at the location where the horse was being boarded. Complainant had expressed concerns about the procedure therefore Respondent discussed at length what to expect. Upon exam, the horse had an approximate weight = 1000 pounds, a temperature = 99.8 degrees, a heart rate = 30bpm and a respiration rate = 20rpm; no abnormalities were noted on exam.
4. Respondent sedated the horse with xylazine and butorphanol IV and anesthetized the horse with ketamine and midazolam IV. The horse laid down and was placed laterally. A leg restraint was placed on the hind right leg and the rope was handed to Ms. Holder. The scrotal area was prepared for surgery and a line block was performed with 2% lidocaine as well as an intra-testicular block (20mLs). The horse was then administered Excede, Banamine and a Tetanus Toxoid vaccine.
5. While the castration was being performed, the horse woke up, rolled over a couple times – Respondent was able to grab the horse and help him balance while standing. Respondent administered the horse an additional 3mLs of xylazine. Once relaxed, the castration was completed. After the surgery was performed, the horse was cleaned up, and Equinoxx was dispensed.
6. Respondent advised Complainant that post-operative swelling was common, especially in older horses. She told Complainant to hose the horse off and exercise him regularly to assist with the swelling.
7. Later that evening, Complainant called Respondent to report the horse was bleeding. Respondent requested Complainant send pictures/video of the bleeding. Once Complainant arrived at the stable, she sent Respondent images of the horse bleeding. Upon arrival, Respondent examined the horse and found a small bleeding vessel along the left lateral aspect of the spermatic cord. There was evidence of blood staining along both hind legs and

distal tail.

8. Respondent sedated the horse with detomidine and the bleeding vessel was ligated. The horse was cleaned up and returned to his stall; no other bleeding was noted. Complainant was instructed to monitor the horse and to expect a lot of swelling.

9. The following day, Complainant reached out to Respondent's premises to give them her email address since she had not received follow up care as promised.

10. Over the next several days, Complainant sent pictures of the horse's scrotum and how it was healing. She was concerned with the swelling but was advised that it was normal and to keep doing what she was doing.

11. On November 2, 2020, Complainant requested a refill of pain medication. She also sent an updated picture as the left side of the scrotum was not looking well. Respondent agreed to refill the pain medication and also wanted to prescribe an antibiotic.

12. The next day, Complainant called and requested to have a veterinarian come out to evaluate the horse. The scrotum was bulging, foul smelling, and had tissue hanging out with discharge. She was advised that the schedule was full and if Complainant wanted Respondent to come out she would need to pay an after-hours/emergency fee along with a travel fee. Complainant stated that she did not want to pay for the services as she felt it was Respondent's fault the sutures did not hold.

13. On November 4, 2020, the horse was seen by Dr. Ozmun from Southwest Equine Hospital for a second opinion. The horse was sedated and noted the stump coming from the left scrotal sac was a scirrhus cord. There was a large amount of necrotic tissue and the right scrotal sac also had a large amount of granulation tissue present.

14. The following day, the horse was anesthetized and surgery was performed to remove a large amount of granulation and necrotic tissue from the left scrotal sac. Additionally, a large amount of the scirrhus cord was necrotic and was also removed. The right sac was debrided well for better drainage, and both sacs were thoroughly cleaned of all mucopurulent material. The horse recovered well, was monitored closely overnight, and was discharged on November 6, 2020. Complainant was instructed to give medication dispensed, exercise the animal and keep the area clean.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION:

The Committee discussed that there were multiple issues with the case starting with the horse waking up during the castration. It is possible that this led to some of the post-op complications. In mature horses it is not uncommon to have swelling and bleeding several days after a castration. Some veterinarians will still ligate some of these mature horses to prevent these

situations from occurring.

The Committee was disappointed that they were unable to speak with Respondent regarding the post-surgical follow up and communication. Complainant was quoted for emergency fees but it seems Respondent did not follow up with Complainant's concerns and the horse's post-surgical complications.

In the small animal world, there would have been more follow-up and communication. Things happen, the horse waking up and needing more sedation is a situation that can occur. However, when the horse began having post-surgical complications it seems more could have been done to take care of the horse.

The pictures Complainant provided were helpful – which were sent to Respondent to get the concerns addressed. The horse owner's request for additional medication should have alerted Respondent that there was an issue that needed to be addressed. Another veterinarian needed to perform corrective surgery and not just treat the issue.

The Committee felt that if Respondent was unable to see the horse in a timely fashion, she should have referred the horse elsewhere for care. It is understood that the equine world is different from small animal medicine, however, the horse's care needed to be prioritized based on the information provided.

COMMITTEE'S PROPOSED CONCLUSIONS of LAW:

The Committee concluded that possible violations of the Veterinary Practice Act occurred.

COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDED DISPOSITION:

Motion: It was moved and seconded the Board find:

ARS § 32-2232 (11) Gross negligence; treatment of a patient or practice of veterinary medicine resulting in injury, unnecessary suffering or death that was caused by carelessness, negligence or the disregard of established principles or practices for disregarding the horse owner's concerns and not referring the horse elsewhere for medical attention if Respondent was not able to evaluate the animal in a timely fashion.

Vote: The motion was approved with a vote of 4 to 0.

The information contained in this report was obtained from the case file, which includes the complaint, the respondent's response, any consulting veterinarian or witness input, and any other sources used to gather information for the investigation.

DOUGLAS. A DUCEY
GOVERNOR



VICTORIA WHITMORE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ARIZONA STATE VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINING BOARD

1740 W. ADAMS STREET, STE. 4600, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

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IN ACCORDANCE WITH § A.R.S. 32-2237(D): "IF THE BOARD REJECTS ANY RECOMMENDATION CONTAINED IN A REPORT OF THE INVESTIGATIVE COMMITTEE, IT SHALL DOCUMENT THE REASONS FOR ITS DECISION IN WRITING."

At the August 18, 2021 meeting of the Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board, the Board conducted an Informal Interview in Case 21-57, In Re: Racheal McKinney, DVM.

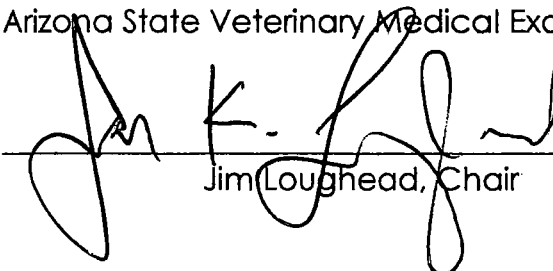
The Board considered the Investigative Committee Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Disposition:

ARS § 32-2232 (11) Gross negligence; treatment of a patient or practice of veterinary medicine resulting in injury, unnecessary suffering or death that was caused by carelessness, negligence or the disregard of established principles or practices for disregarding the horse owner's concerns and not referring the horse elsewhere for medical attention if Respondent was not able to evaluate the animal in a timely fashion.

Following the Informal Interview with Respondent and reviewing additional information presented, the Board did not agree with the Investigative Committee's recommendation. It was their position that Respondent provided appropriate care and treatment to the horse and dismissed the matter with no violation.

Respectfully submitted this 15TH day of September, 2021.

Arizona State Veterinary Medical Examining Board


Jim Loughhead, Chair